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IN THE CLAIMS:

For the convenience of the Examiner, all pending claims of the present application are shown below in clean form whether or not an amendment has been made. Please refer to the attached sheet showing a mark-up version of the amendments to the claims.

✓ Please cancel Claims 1 – 6 without prejudice or disclaimer.

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7. (Amended) A pellicle comprising a thin film including an optical thickness, the optical thickness operable to produce a transmission maxima for normal incidence light at a wavelength greater than an exposure wavelength in order to maximize transmission of the exposure wavelength at an angle of incidence greater than zero.

8. (Amended) The pellicle of Claim 7, further comprising increasing the optical thickness by less than or equal to approximately one-quarter of the exposure wavelength in order to produce the transmission maxima.

9. (Amended) The pellicle of Claim 7, further comprising the transmission maxima located between approximately one nanometer and approximately twenty nanometers above the exposure wavelength.

10. The pellicle of Claim 7, further comprising an anti-reflective coating disposed on a top surface and a bottom surface of the thin film.

11. The pellicle of Claim 10, wherein the anti-reflective coating includes a first refractive index approximately equal to the square root of a second refractive index associated with the thin film.

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12. (Amended) The pellicle of Claim 10, further comprising the transmission maxima located between approximately one nanometer and approximately twenty nanometers above the exposure wavelength.

13. The pellicle of Claim 10, wherein the anti-reflective coating includes a thickness between approximately one-quarter of the exposure wavelength and approximately one-half of the exposure wavelength.

14. The pellicle of Claim 7, further comprising a plurality of adjoining anti-reflective coatings disposed on a top surface and a bottom surface of the thin film, each of the anti-reflective coatings including a different refractive index.

15. The pellicle of Claim 7, wherein the thin film comprises an amorphous fluoropolymer.

16. The pellicle of Claim 7, wherein:
the thin film includes a thickness of approximately 855 nanometers; and
the exposure wavelength is between approximately 248 nanometers and approximately 436 nanometers.

17. **(Amended)** A photolithography system for optimizing off-axis transmission of light, comprising:

a photomask; and

a pellicle comprising:

a frame coupled to the photomask; and

a thin film operable to transmit approximately ninety-nine percent (99%) of off-axis light at an exposure wavelength, the thin film including an optical thickness that produces a transmission maxima for normal incidence light at a wavelength greater than the exposure wavelength.

18. **(Amended)** The system of Claim 17, further comprising increasing the optical thickness by less than or equal to approximately one-quarter of the exposure wavelength in order to produce the transmission maxima.

19. (Amended) The system of Claim 17, further comprising the transmission maxima located between approximately one nanometer and approximately twenty nanometers above the exposure wavelength.

20. The system of Claim 17, further comprising an anti-reflective coating disposed on a top surface and a bottom surface of the thin film, the anti-reflective coating including a thickness between approximately one-quarter of the exposure wavelength and approximately one-half of the exposure wavelength.

21. (Amended) The system of Claim 20, further comprising the transmission maxima located between approximately one nanometer and approximately twenty nanometers above the exposure wavelength.

22. The system of Claim 20, wherein the anti-reflective coating includes a first refractive index approximately equal to the square root of a second refractive index associated with the thin film.

23. The system of Claim 17, further comprising a plurality of adjoining anti-reflective coatings disposed on a top surface and a bottom surface of the thin film, each of the anti-reflective coatings including a different refractive index.

24. The system of Claim 17, wherein the frame comprises aluminum.

25. The system of Claim 17, wherein the thin film comprises an amorphous fluoropolymer.

26. (Amended) A method for performing photolithography, comprising:
forming a thin film including an optical thickness, the optical thickness operable to produce a transmission maxima for normal incidence light at a wavelength greater than an exposure wavelength in order to maximize transmission of the exposure wavelength at an angle of incidence greater than zero;
attaching the thin film to a frame to form a pellicle;

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mounting the pellicle to a photomask; and
exposing the pellicle and the photomask to radiant energy having the exposure wavelength.

27. The method of Claim 26, further comprising coating a top surface of the thin film with an anti-reflective material, the anti-reflective material including a thickness between approximately one-quarter of the exposure wavelength and approximately one-half of the exposure wavelength.

28. The method of Claim 27, further comprising coating a bottom surface of the thin film with the anti-reflective material.

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29. (Amended) The method of Claim 26, further comprising the transmission maxima located between approximately one nanometer and approximately twenty nanometers above the exposure wavelength.

30. The method of Claim 26, further comprising coating at least one of a top surface and a bottom surface of the thin film with a plurality of adjoining layers of anti-reflective material, each layer including a different refractive index.

REMARKS

Applicants have carefully reviewed this Application in light of the Office Action mailed May 1, 2002 (Paper No. 4). Claims 1-6 have been canceled and Claims 7- 30 are pending in this Application. Claims 1-30 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, Claims 1-3, 7-9, 17-19 and 26 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) and Claims 4-6, 10-16, 20-25 and 27-30 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103. Applicants have amended Claims 7-9, 12, 17-19, 21, 26 and 29 to further define various features of Applicants' invention. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and favorable action in this case.

Objections to the Drawings

The Examiner objected to the drawings for failing to comply with 37 C.F.R. 1.83(a). Specifically, the Examiner stated that "the features concerning *anti-reflective coating* recited